

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GENEVA 04616 091544Z

ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IOE-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 PA-02 PRS-01 SSO-00 INRE-00

SS-15 SP-02 L-03 H-02 NSC-05 HEW-06 /070 W

-----091602Z 002909 /41

O 091452Z JUN 77

FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8097

UNCLAS GENEVA 4616

USIAC

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJ: EDITORIAL ON ILO

1. THE FOLLOWING EDITORIAL, SIGNED BY ITS CHIEF EDITOR
GEORGES-HENRI MARTIN, APPEARED JUNE 8 IN THE TRIBUNE DE
GENEVE, ONE OF THE MAJOR NEWSPAPERS OF FRENCH-SPEAKING
SWITZERLAND:

2. HEADLINE: THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION BETWEEN
LIFE AND DEATH - TRADE UNION LIBERTY GIVES A BAD CONSCIENCE
TO THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES. AS WELL AS TO THIRD WORLD
COUNTRIES LIVING UNDER DICTATORSHIP -- GROWING DANGER OF A
U.S. DEPARTURE.

3. THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION IS UNIQUE OF ITS
KIND: INSTEAD OF BEING AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION,
IN THE IMAGE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, THE ILO IS A SPECIALIZED
AGENCY WHERE THERE ARE REPRESENTED ON AN EQUAL FOOTING, THE
THREE PRINCIPAL ECONOMIC FORCES OF EACH COUNTRY: THE
EMPLOYERS, THE WORKERS AND THE GOVERNMENT.

4. THIS TRIPARTITE SYSTEM, WHEN IT WAS CONCEIVED BY THE
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PAGE 02 GENEVA 04616 091544Z

CELEBRATED FRENCH STATESMAN ALBERT THOMAS AND THE FOUNDERS
OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR OFFICE, WAS IN THE VANGUARD OF
SOCIAL PROGRESS.

5. IN FACT, THE TRIPARTITE SYSTEM CONSECRATED -- FOREVER,
ONE BELIEVED AT THE TIME -- THE TRADE UNION FREEDOM FOR WHICH
THE LABOR MOVEMENT HAD BATTLED THROUGHOUT THE 19TH

CENTURY.

6. SINCE THEN THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES, STARTING WITH THE SOVIET UNION, HAVE ABOLISHED TRADE UNION FREEDOM AND THE COUNTRIES OF THE THIRD WORLD, ACCEDING TO NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, HAVE FAILED TO DEMONSTRATE THE SKILL AND POLITICAL WISDOM REQUIRED FOR THE SMOOTH FUNCTIONING OF THIS TRADE UNION FREEDOM.

7. EVEN A RELATIVELY ADVANCED COUNTRY SUCH AS ALGERIA, UNDER THE IRON FIRST OF BOUMEDIENNE, STILL HAS TO ESTABLISH TRADE-UNION FREEDOM.

8. UNDER THESE CONDITIONS, OCCUPIED LESS AND LESS WITH THE PROBLEMS OF WORK AND MORE AND MORE WITH POLITICAL FOOTBALLS, THE ILO HAS CHANGED NOT JUST IN STYLE BUT IN ITS PROFOUND NATURE. TYPICAL EXAMPLE OF THE NEW TENDENCIES IS TO BE FOUND IN THE PROPOSAL OF PANAMA SEEKING TO EXPLOIT THE LABOR CONFERENCE FOR PROPAGANDA PURPOSES AGAINST THE EXISTENCE OF THE PANAMA CANAL ZONE. THERE ARE OTHER FORA THAN THE ILO TO OCCUPY THEMSELVES WITH THE CANAL.

9. THE UNITED STATES HAS ANNOUNCED, ALMOST TWO YEARS AGO, THAT IF THIS LITTLE GAME OF POLITICAL FOOTBALL IS PREFERRED TO THE SERIOUS DISCUSSION OF THE LARGE QUESTIONS OF LABOR AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WOULD COMPLETELY LOSE INTEREST IN THE ORGANIZATION.

10. THE ENTRANCE OF THE UNITED STATES I THE ILO
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PAGE 03 GENEVA 04616 091544Z

REQUIRED, AT THE TIME, YEARS OF EFFORT ON THE PART OF PRESIDENT FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT. IF AMERICA LEAVES, THE FACE OF THE ILO WILL CHANGE. IT IS ALWAYS EASIER TO DESTROY THAN TO BUILD.

1. AFTER THAT WILL COME THE TURN OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION WHICH ONE ALSO WILL BE ABLE TO DEMOLISH AND THAT OF UNESCO WHICH ALREADY HAS BEEN READY TO COLLAPSE.

12. WHATEVER THE CASE MAY BE, THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION, WHICH WAS SHAPED WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE LABOR MOVEMENTS, SOON WILL NO LONGER EXIST IN THE SHAPE THAT WE HAVE KNOWN. IN ITS PLACE, WE SHALL HAVE ONE MORE POLITICAL FOOTBALL FIELD AND ONE LESS WORKSHOP FOR PEACE.

12. THE TRADITIONAL ILO TODAY IS BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH. THE ILO, IF IT DIES, WILL HAVE BEEN THE VICTIM OF A COALITION: THE ALLIANCE OF ALL THE FORCES IN THE WORLD WHO DO NOT LIKE THE FREEDOM OF THE PERSON. TO THESE PEOPLE

WHO DO NOT LIKE FREEDOM -- SOCIALIST COUNTRIES AND COUNTRIES
OF THE THIRD WORLD -- THE EXISTENCE OF TRADE UNION FREEDOM
AT THE ILO IS A DISAGREEABLE REMINDER WHICH GIVES THEM A
BAD CONSCIENCE. IT IS NO DOUBT BECAUSE OF THAT THAT THEY
DON'T FEAR TO MISTREAT THE UNFORTUNATE ILO WHICH GENEVA
AND THE SWISS UNIONS LIKE SO MUCH. AND, AMONG SOME
DELEGATES, THERE CERTAINLY IS A JOY, SOMETIMES SADISTIC AND
SOMETIMES CHILDISH, IN DESTROYING THE ILO.

13. SADISM CONSISTS IN MAKING SUFFER SEVERAL GENERATIONS OF
PEOPLE WHO HAVE BUILT PATIENTLY THE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
AT THE ILO AND WHO SEE THEIR WORK DESTROYED. THE CHILDISH
AMUSEMENT IS THAT OF THE JOHNNIES-COME-LATELY WHO, WITHOUT
WORRYING ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES, IMAGINE THAT ONE CAN
WITH IMPUNITY TREAD UNDERFOOT THE SPIRIT OF COMPROMISE
AND MODERATION ON WHICH ALL DURABLE PEACE RESTS.

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PAGE 04 GENEVA 04616 091544Z

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 09-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977GENEVA04616
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770206-0131
Format: TEL
From: GENEVA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770675/aaaacney.tel
Line Count: 139
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 02351782-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2218030
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EDITORIAL ON ILO
TAGS: ELAB
To: USIA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/02351782-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009